

2013 begins with crystal blue skies, frigid temperatures and a lovely blanket of snow. What a privilege to live in this beautiful city and valley. As the recently appointed mayor of the City of Gunnison, it is my pleasure to take a look back at 2012 and a look forward to 2013 on behalf of the City of Gunnison.

Change is always with us and Gunnison City Council has seen some changes recently. Jonathan Houck, who has served the city as councilor and mayor for the past year and a half, was elected in November 2012 to serve on the Gunnison Board of County Commissioners. I have served as Mayor Pro Tem and will now finish Jonathan's term as Mayor. Sharon Cave has been appointed to complete his term as city councilor. While we are reluctant to see Jonathan move on, we thank him for his service to the city and know that he will be a great asset as he serves the entire county. Sharon brings a fresh voice and new ideas to the City Council. As many as four of the five councilor positions will be up for election in May. The current city council has worked throughout 2012 in the best interests of the citizens of Gunnison and looks forward to continuing that effort. We have confidence that whoever is elected in May will take up the tradition of service where we leave off.

The citizens of Gunnison are well served by a positive, talented and hardworking staff from the fire and police departments to city utilities and the maintenance of the streets to the amazing recreational facilities that are city-owned and operated. In response to the continuing flat economy, city staff has cut five positions. There is an ongoing effort to balance the need to provide high quality public services and maintain a positive work environment that is as efficient as possible. The change in staff size is part of the effort to keep our city in good financial shape.

Another big change in our community is that after 100 years the school, formerly known as Western State College of Colorado, has been renamed Western State Colorado University. This name reflects many changes initiated at WSCU to better position itself within the changes in higher education over the state and nation. The facilities on campus continue to be upgraded and the students positioned well for the jobs of the future. The city supports students through an internship program in which WSCU students propose projects of value to their education and of value to the city. A Western student attends council meetings. The city will continue to work closely with this very important partner.

The city continues to look for opportunities to increase sustainability on a variety of fronts. Incandescent street lights are being replaced with LED bulbs. The solar panel array on the Community Center provides heated water to the showers and the swimming pool. The city provides space on publicly-owned land for community gardens, a secure water rights portfolio, a regular curb-side recycling program, and provides a strong renewable energy mix at a competitive price to our customers.

The city staff and council continue to participate in activities that seek solutions to ongoing economic issues. The city supports festivals and events. The Pro Cycling Challenge was one of the exciting events of the summer. We enjoyed the White Water Festival, several bike races, both those who started in, or came through, our community, and homegrown ones at Hartman Rocks like the Growler. Cattleman's Days continues to show why it is the signature event of the summer. Boomers and Beyond have found a home at the Community Center and share space with the Young at Heart. The ice facility has hosted many hockey tournaments and provided generous public skating times. The city trails continue to be

improved. While the economy continues to struggle, the city continues to look for ways to improve the city as an attractive place in which to live, visit, and do business.

2013 is will bring many more changes. We anticipate redundancy in the Wi-Fi service into the city. While the Pro Cycle Challenge has chosen a different route for 2013, we look forward to a summer of events and festivals. Western looks forward to the completion of the new indoor track. Dr. Jay Helman, President of WSCU, is planning to step down in 2014. Stay tuned.